of the port limits, the exercise of civil and criminal jurisdiction over the limits of the port of Cochin when it is developed, the introduction of the Cochin Port Trust Act, the working of the Cochin Public Canals and Ferries Regulation and the supply of fresh water to the port of Cochin were also considered. The final decision of the Government of India has not yet been arrived at in regard to the date from which the regular practice of ocean-going steamers entering the harbour and discharging at moorings inside the backwater should be deemed to have been established and the tripartite division of the customs revenue realised at the port of Cochin should take effect : a conference is to be held on this subject in Delhi next month.

**Law's Delays Commissioner**

16. Reference was made in my predecessor's opening address at the last session to the work of the Law's Delays Commissioner appointed to enquire into the question of delay in the disposal of civil cases, to suggest measures for the more speedy execution of decrees and orders issued by the courts and to examine and report upon the need for the readjustment of the territorial jurisdiction of civil courts. Rao Bahadur G. Sankara Pillai entered on his duties as Commissioner on the 22nd Meenam 1105 and practically completed the work on the 30th Tulam 1107, since which date he has kindly agreed to continue as Honorary Commissioner to see the report through the press.

**Joint Stock Companies.**

17. The office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Compaines, which was being held by Mr. K. Venkata Rao, Director of Registration, was, on his retirement, attached to the Registrar of Co-operative Societies. The number of companies registered during 1106 was 40 against 86 in the previous year, thus reflecting the depression in business conditions. A remarkable feature of the first six months of the current year has been the rush in the registration of what are locally known as free insurance companies. The first indigenous insurance company was registered in 1105; twelve such concerns were registered in 1106; and of the fifty-four companies registered since the beginning of 1107, as many as forty-two are insurance companies. Insurance, unlike other business, requires little or no capital and the smallness of the premia or subscriptions levied makes the new ventures attractive to the people at large. These companies do not insure lives on medical certificates but on benefit funds offering to pay bonus on the happening of certain contingencies when calls would also be made on the subscribers. As the concerns are private companies, the Registrar's control over them under the Travancore Companies Regulation, I of 1092, is negligible and the time seems to have arrived to undertake legislation on the lines of the Insurance Acts in force in British India.

**Public Works.**

18. The financial situation necessitated a curtailment in the programme of new works in 1106 and the expenditure on ordinary public works charged to revenue amounted only to Rs. 39·16 lakhs against

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